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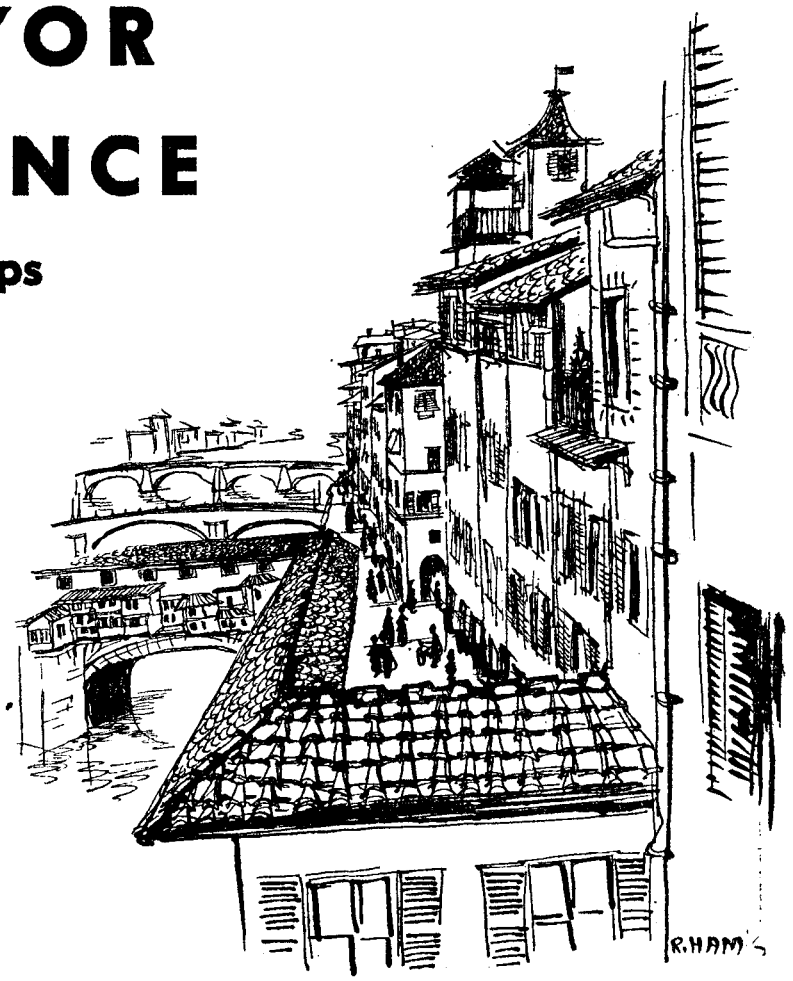
THE

Commonweal

THE MAYOR OF FLORENCE

by Vanna Phillips



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Volume LVIII, Number 4 May 1, 1953 Twenty Cent

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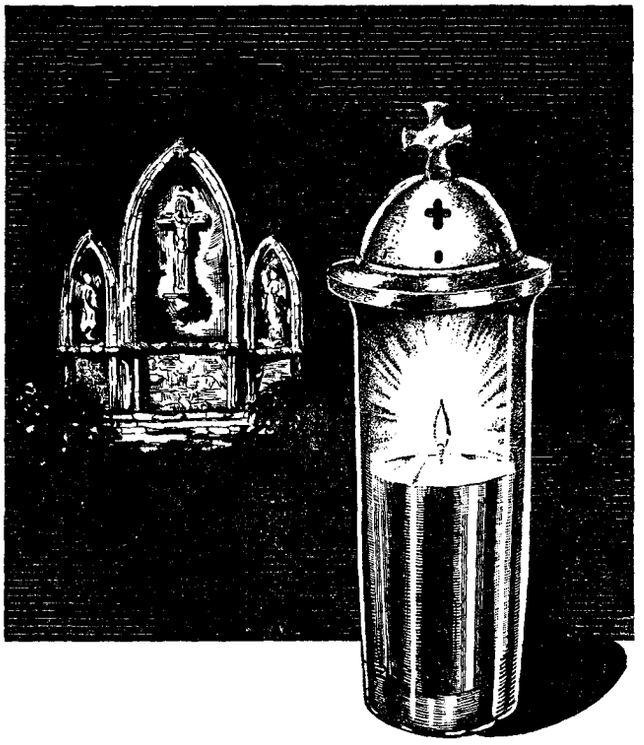

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386 FOURTH AVENUE
NEW YORK 16

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Published weekly, printed and copyrighted 1953, in the U. S. A. by The Commonweal Publishing Co., Inc., 386 Fourth Ave., New York 16, N. Y., MUrray Hill 3-9685. Entered as second-class matter, February 9, 1934, at the post office at New York, N. Y., under the act of March 3, 1879. U. S. and Canda, $7 a year. Foreign $8. Single copies, 20c.

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THE Commonweal

week by week

TO LIVE IN PEACE

MAN'S desire to live in peace has deep roots, and his hunger for an end to war acknowledges limitations neither of geography nor of ideology. An appeal for peace is as moving to a Chinese as to an American, as compelling in Warsaw as it is in Seoul. It was to this universal desire for peace that President Eisenhower addressed himself when he spoke recently to the American Society of Newspaper Editors.

In that speech, the nation saw Dwight D. Eisenhower at his best. During the course of his efforts to win the Presidency, many who had previously counted themselves his warm admirers were grievously disappointed at his campaign conduct. Many more have been disappointed in the conduct of his Administration to date. But in his response to the Soviet peace feelers, President Eisenhower displayed those qualities of the soldier-statesman which first touched off the Eisenhower-for-President boom.

The President did not rush in blindly. He laid down conditions which will have to be met by the Soviet Union. He spelled out for the Russian leaders exactly what we expect if we are to take the talk of peace seriously. We have been fooled before, and the weeks ahead will be filled with warnings about the many dangers ahead. All this is as it should be, perhaps, for the risks involved are great. But President Eisenhower's great accomplishment in this case comes from the fact that he concerned himself, not merely with obstacles, but with providing a vision of the world at peace, free at last from the crushing burden of armaments.

"The world in arms is not spending money alone," Mr. Eisenhower said. "It is spending the sweat of its laborers, the genius of its scientists, the hopes of its children. . . . We pay for a single fighter plane with a half-million bushels of wheat. . . . We pay for a single destroyer with new homes that could have housed more than eight thousand people."

In such plain language the President went over the heads of Prime ministers and parliaments, of generals and councils, to speak directly to the people. In place of atomic war, he pictured the possibilities of a new kind of war. He summoned all nations to what he called "a declared, total war, not upon any human enemy, but upon the brute force of poverty and need."

For the United States, President Eisenhower declared our willingness "to help build a world in which all peoples can be productive and prosperous" by devoting a substantial percentage of the savings achieved by disarmament to a fund for world aid and reconstruction. "We are ready, in short," the President said, "to dedicate our strength to serving the needs, rather than the fears, of the world."

IT would be hard to speak more plainly than this. Disagreement with certain of Mr. Eisenhower's preliminary conditions can be expected. But in his address he has provided, in capsule form, a classic statement of the purposes of Western foreign policy and of our hopes for the future. It is in such terms that it is being hailed abroad.

Here at home, President Eisenhower is unlikely to have such clear sailing. It is part of the tragedy of his present position that the more he sounds like the architect of European unity and the inspiration of the "I Like Ike" movement, the more he imperils his position as the leader of a unified Republican party. As a result, some of the most ignominious episodes in the President's short political career have been caused by his desire to placate the right wing of his own party.

If the Soviet Union now shows any sign of responding favorably to the President's pattern for peace, these same elements in the GOP are likely to cause him more trouble. Working out a solution to present world problems will be a tricky business at best. The process of negotiation will be slow, and it will necessarily involve some give-and-take on both sides. If anything short of complete fulfillment of right-wing dreams is to be denounced as appeasement, such negotiations can never be carried out.

Despite conciliatory moves by the Soviet Union, the hopes for peace are slim enough. A few irre-

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sponsible men must not be allowed to destroy even those slim hopes. Recently a U.S. Senator was quoted as saying, "If only we could elect a few more Democrats to the Senate, Ike would be sure of the majority he needs." It will surprise no one to learn that the Senator who stated the problem in these partisan terms was himself a Democrat. But, party-labels aside, the problem he referred to is a real one.

President Eisenhower cannot command a majority inside his own party on matters of foreign policy. If he is forced to compromise with the extremists inside that party, it will be impossible for him to continue along the lines of our present foreign policy. This fact has long made it obvious that on matters of foreign policy he needed the support of every responsible citizen and legislator, regardless of party. In dealing with the new Soviet overtures to the West, he will need that support more than ever, if men's hopes for peace are not again to be dashed.

RAIDS ON THE PUBLIC DOMAIN

IN the early days of the New Deal such Rooseveltian phrases as "vested interests" and "special privilege" imparted vigor to addresses on domestic problems. When monopoly and unchecked private enterprise then gave way to government regulation and control, such terms lost much of their political sting. It now looks as if they will soon be back in the political picture.

This swing of the pendulum is comparable to what has followed defeats of Labor governments in Australia, New Zealand and Great Britain. Yet in those Commonwealth nations retracing of steps has been very limited indeed. The changes which our new Administration bids fair to put over in its first few months are big strides in comparison.

Transfer to California, Florida, Louisiana and Texas of title to offshore oil lands is first on the whole Eisenhower legislative list. Properties worth some forty billions are to be exploited by private companies with royalties going only to those four coastal states. Yet three times in recent years the United States Supreme Court has declared that these vital resources belong to the nation as a whole. Not only the extent and importance of these untapped sources of underseas wealth make the battle in the Senate against transfer so deserving of public support. The shift of offshore oil to the states leads to other attacks on the federal domain.

National parks and other public lands are already in grave danger. Lumber interests in the Far West have their eyes on big tracts of Olympia National Park. Both House and Senate are considering bills that would give private interests grazing and other privileges on our public lands—which are also threatened by attempts to bring outdated mining laws to bear on behalf of private claimants.

Private utilities are making their influence felt against regional river valley development and public power generally. What is not attainable through straight legislation, these companies may well be able to procure through friendly administering—such as purchase of the electricity generated by government dams.

That legislation is not always required is indicated by the dismissal of Albert M. Day, director of the federal Fish and Wildlife Service. Mr. Day declares that Secretary McKay took this step under pressure from California duck hunters and Alaska salmon packers opposed to conservation.

The offshore oil battle therefore is of the widest public concern. It must be followed up by stands against similar legislative and administrative raids on vital national resources—there would be reason enough to resist them solely in the interests of national defense. And if the Administration succeeds in transferring to private enterprise much of the natural resources now held as a public trust (so that profit becomes the criterion for their preservation and development) it will present the voters with a tremendous issue in 1954 and 1956.

NEXT WEEK

EVELYN WAUGH writes about the myth of Marshal Tito.

"Why did the Russians wish to dispense with him? This kind of cannibalism is, of course, endemic in the Communist system. . . . But in Tito's case there was a further personal cause. He plainly bored them unendurably with his boasting. 'Tito Speaks' suggests the eagerly awaited breaking of a long silence, as though by an Eastern mystic after years of solitary contemplation. In fact Tito has never ceased speaking. Again and again we are told that Tito, addressing some congress, began by rehearsing the history and triumphs of the Yugoslav Army of Liberation. It seems to be his normal warming-up before any utterance, and no doubt it was extremely tedious to comrades like Bierut who have no such achievements to proclaim."

LAMENT

IN the third week of April, two-and-one-half million men exiled themselves from the Free World. Our confident platitudes echoed slightly more for them.

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This is not to say that to modify "West" with "freedom" is now hypocrisy, it is rather to make those of us who live in the free West respect what we have, and see that our system of liberties belongs to us on a pledge which we may at any time redeem.

The European peoples of South Africa account for one-fifth of the population. There are about two-and-a-half million of them, and they are an educated, enlightened group, comparable in privilege and opportunity to the populations of any Western countries. Last week they went to the polls, and in a calm exercise of the democratic process, voted for virulent racism, for depriving the whole ten million people of Negro and Asian blood within their borders of the right of full citizenship, for disenfranchising those colored people who have the vote; and quite possibly voted never to vote again.

They thereby provided one meaningful lesson: that justice is not subject to the democratic process, and right may be a minority cause.

They proved that a modern community may become weary of freedom, and end it for fear of its consequences.

It was not that they hated Negroes and Asians as individuals, it is that they saw themselves a privileged white island in a dark continent, and they saw quite rightly that to extend democracy to the non-white races inevitably meant a South Africa largely governed by the non-white races. They had a sacrifice demanded of them, which, even in a cautious, modified form, they were unable to bring themselves to make. That the sacrifice is inevitable they would not admit out loud. But they must recognize in themselves that the non-white people of South Africa will obtain what is due them. So the whites erect walls, hire police, build camps. They pass laws against the sea, and as the sea rises they flay it. And the means they use to gain what they, as fundamentalist Calvinists, regard as a good end, become history, while the perfectly segregated state they desire retreats further and further into paranoic dreams.

There is unmistakable pertinence here in a statement from Nicolas Berdyaev's last book: ". . . no one ever proposes evil ends: evil is always disguised as good, and detracts from the good. This becomes evident only in the means employed. These means always give evidence of the spirit of the men who use them, the spirit of freedom or slavery, of love or hate."

With South Africa, it is a matter of deadly importance to ten million colored peoples and to the seven-hundred-fifty-eight thousand whites who voted for moderation. There the people have pulled down the shades, locked the door, and rejected man.

THE CATHOLIC WORKER

TWENTY years ago to this date, on May Day, 1933, the first issue of the *Catholic Worker* was published by Dorothy Day and Peter Maurin. During the two decades since then the Catholic Worker movement has made a contribution to American Catholicism significant beyond telling or measuring. It has taught and acted the Christian Revolution of the works of mercy, refusing to compromise it with any "prudent" counsels of adaptation to more comfortable patterns of the existing order. It has been consistently "foolish" in the sense of Saint Paul's "foolishness"—"in order to confound the wise."

Something of this spirit was caught in Dwight McDonald's profile of Dorothy Day, "The Foolish Things of the World," published in the *New Yorker* last fall. It seemed evident that in this subject Mr. McDonald had found something he had not guessed could exist in contemporary American Catholicism —and that the finding of it had taught him something wonderful and profound about the Church. To know the Catholic Worker, he said is to learn that within the Church "there are more mansions than are dreamed of in Mr. Blanshard's philosophy."

What Mr. McDonald glimpsed in the spirit of the Catholic Worker countless young Americans have seen during the past twenty years. A few of them spent part of their youth working in the movement; others merely read the movement's paper, but, in any event, the lesson was widely learned. And the lesson was not ideological. (Indeed, many of those who have been influenced by the Catholic Worker would probably not themselves subscribe to those ideological crusades which have been attached to it.) It was a lesson more universal than any ideology: the lesson of Christian freedom, of the works of mercy, of Saint Paul's "foolishness."

Now, on its twentieth anniversary, the Catholic Worker has suffered one of the greatest material setbacks in its history. On April 18 its headquarters in New York was largely destroyed by fire. The House of Hospitality where it feeds the hungry, clothes the naked, and shelters the homeless (not neglecting, in all this, to instruct the ignorant and counsel the doubtful too) must be practically rebuilt. Money for this is desperately needed.

This would seem to be the time for American Catholics to repay the Catholic Worker, in some small way, for what it has given to all of us. We are all in its debt. Contributions, however small or however large, should be sent to The Catholic Worker, 223 Chrystie Street, New York 2, N. Y. It would be a sad comment on American Catholicism if now, in their time of need, the merciful should themselves be denied mercy.

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DISCRIMINATION

ASIDE from "unplanned parenthood," Mr. Paul Blanshard in his letter to The Commonweal [*April 10*] lists "segregated education," "discriminatory marriage" and "denominational censorship" as undemocratic "policies" of "Catholic power." The Commonweal has now received another letter from Mr. Blanshard in which he asks that his position on these issues be dealt with according to his actual beliefs and not any distorted version of them.

The "usual distortion" of his position on "segregated education," Mr. Blanshard says, is summed up: "Blanshard denies that Catholics have any right to have their own schools." But, in his own words, here is his true position: "The Catholic policy of segregated education, summed up in Canon 1374, under which Catholics are forbidden to attend schools with non-Catholic children without permission of the Bishop, is not only divisive but is imposed upon Catholic parents from above and enforced by religious penalties which constitute theological coercion."

Now the Supreme Court has decided that American Catholics, or any other Americans, have the right to conduct their own schools as long as these schools meet state standards. What is more, if there is anything "undemocratic" in the non-public school question, it would seem that it lies in insisting that all American children attend the State schools.

So it is not the *fact* of Catholic schools that Mr. Blanshard deems "undemocratic," but the "policy" which insists that all Catholic children receive a religious education and that the Bishop's permission be sought before Catholics can enter non-Catholic, mixed or neutral schools. (This, incidentally, is slightly different from the way Mr. Blanshard puts it. He loads his case with "Catholics are forbidden to attend schools with non-Catholic children": as a matter of fact, many non-Catholic children attend Catholic schools. In some places Catholic schools are the *only* non-segregated schools Negro children can attend.)

Failure to fulfill the Church's law on the school question carries with it "religious penalties"—in other words it is regarded by the Church and by Catholics as disobedience of a legitimate ecclesiastical law. The fact that the Church teaches that such disobedience is meaningful and that Catholics actually believe this constitutes what Mr. Blanshard calls "theological coercion."

I suppose that Catholics could be "democratized" by refusing to accept their Church's position until it was reaffirmed by a popular vote and by refusing to accept the "religious penalties" that go with disobedience, or at least by denying that such "penalties" exist—easy enough to do, since they are in the spiritual order. Thus would American Catholics manfully resist "theological coercion." In the process, of course, they would also be betraying their theological convictions. But Mr. Blanshard seems to have no hesitations on that score.

The price of "democratization" along Blanshard lines clearly runs high. Just on this one point, it seems to demand that American Catholics actually revamp their idea of the nature of the Church and of ecclesiastical authority, both essentially theological questions. The "democratized" Catholic, it would appear, simply isn't a Catholic any more. He has a Protestant's concept of the Church, a secularist's notion of religion, and a totalitarian's idea of patriotism. This, I suppose, is how Mr. Blanshard would solve the "Catholic problem."

But the question is, would such a remodeled Catholic be more of a "democrat"—and would America be a more "democratic" country because he dutifully conformed to Mr. Blanshard's religious ideas? I think the answer is simple, and I am going to answer it in simple personal terms.

I am a father. I pay public-school taxes without protest or complaint because I think free education should be available to all who want it. But my children attend the local parochial school. I believe that the Church is right about religious education. I also believe that my Bishop has the right to ask of me as a Catholic to conform to certain regulations. I believe that his rights here derive from his authority as a bishop. I believe that this authority is God-given and that because I am a believing Catholic I am morally bound to respect it. I believe that if I disobey the bishop in those areas where he has a right to demand obedience from me I am in a very real sense disobeying God.

To ask me to act otherwise than on this belief is to ask me to betray my basic religious convictions. I am not willing to do this—even if my country asks it of me. But I do not believe my country will ever ask it of me. It accepts me as I am—a Catholic with a Catholic's basic beliefs about his church; and it does not ask me to believe or act like anything else but a Catholic. These are the terms of my citizenship. They could not be any other terms as long as I am what I am.

In the same way, Mr. Blanshard is accepted as Mr. Blanshard and not as something other than what he is. I'd like to keep things that way, and I think that if Mr. Blanshard thinks things over, he will too. I don't want to have to think like Mr. Blanshard about religious questions, and I am quite sure he doesn't want to have to think like me. I don't want to be compelled to think about the Church—what it means, what Christ meant it to mean—like a Protestant, in order to qualify as a "democrat," and I don't want an America where Protestants have to believe like Catholics either.

JOHN COGLEY.

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The Mayor of Florence

THE FLORENTINES HAVE PUT A CHRISTIAN IN CITY HALL WHO, THEY SAY, IS MORE COMMUNIST THAN THE COMMUNISTS.

VANNA PHILLIPS

ACROSS the massive desk, in the Town Hall's Chamber of Clement VII, sat diminutive Giorgio La Pira, self-made man, law professor, left-wing Christian Democrat and incorrigible ascetic, who had surprised both himself and the Florentines two years ago by defeating his predecessor, Moscow-schooled Mayor Fabiani. Though earnestly campaigning against the Red's re-election, La Pira had never meant to run himself, nor did the opposition take him seriously. But La Pira is extremely popular with the proletariat. In a remarkable last-minute reversal many former Communists actually helped to elect him.

I examined the little man. Here was the most discussed figure in Italy: Government officials, city authorities, workmen and peasants, even the large group of Americans in NATO, are extremely articulate on the subject of the new mayor. He irks conservatives both within and without his party by not only giving away every cent he has but every cent of public or private funds he can legitimately lay his hands on. He also antagonizes the Communists by topping all their promises and then actually keeping them. Yet conservatives, Government officials, city employees, workers and peasants, even the Communists themselves agree that in La Pira Florence has a saint for its mayor.

I LOOKED at his desk: piles of appeals from the city poor would be there I knew, more piles of requests from city employees and documents for the city's administration. But a quick glance revealed dozens of foreign postmarks: here then was the mail relating to La Pira's pet scheme of the moment, his Christian Civilization and Peace Convention, a brave antidote to Moscow's Youth Peace Congress. In this convention, a gathering of idealists, La Pira has a chance to voice his own tenets for social reform.

"Social reform in Italy," I said, "will be greatly your doing, *Onorevole*. The United States as well as Europe is deeply interested in your success. With the Italian national elections coming up, the eyes of many are turned towards Italy. You are so famous already for this pro-labor stand of yours," I said, "that they say you are more communist than the Communists. How would you state the principles most applicable the world over to give democratic social reform an edge over the lavish Communist program?"

The mayor settled back in his chair. "This," he said, "is the basic problem. I believe that the peoples of the world need two breads, deeply kneaded together and essential one to the other. The first bread is labor security (no unemployment), housing (a home for all, however humble) and government aid—a policy of total employment in every sense."

The metaphor of bread brought back an unforgettable scene I had witnessed only the day before. La Pira's *Messa dei Poveri* (Poor People's Mass) is still his most cherished interest. It all started some twenty years ago. As a young Sicilian scholar, La Pira first came to the University of Florence as Professor Betti's assistant in the Faculty of Roman Law. Already known to his friends as a selfless ascetic, young La Pira channeled his zeal into the local St. Vincent de Paul society, which was under the direction of one Don Bensi, who in time became La Pira's best friend. Quickly realizing the futility of trying to reach all of the needy by personal visits, *il professore*, as the poor of Florence still call him, got permission to use the tumbledown Church of San Procolo in the very heart of the slums. He arranged for a special Mass for the poor of the city. La Pira visited public flop-houses and soup kitchens and invited everyone to the Mass. After Mass, he told

Mrs. Phillips has done radio and TV work for NBC and CBS, and has contributed a number of articles to Glamour magazine.

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them, loaves of blessed bread would be distributed and "someone" would heed their problems. In time the first motley congregation of bums, scroungers, streetwalkers and pickpockets at the *Messa dei Poveri* doubled and trebled in number. Giorgio spoke comfortingly to them all, listened to their endless requests, crammed his pockets with scribbled notes as they left the church smiling and hugging their freshly-baked loaves. La Pira's colleagues and students pitched in. Free legal and medical advice could be had in the sacristy of San Procolo. And soon separate Masses had to be said, for the men in the Church of Santa Trinita and for the women—this was the moving ceremony I had attended—in the SS. Apostoli. I think I'll never forget the look on the women's faces as they tried to kneel as close as possible to their hero. They held their children up for him to pat on the head, confidently asked him for more food, fuel or work, and for more rooms for their *bambini*.

Perhaps the Poor People's Mass was the beginning of the mayor's revolutionary spirit. Even during the wartime days of strict rationing, the bread distribution had miraculously continued. Sought by the German police, La Pira left town for a few days and returned riding on a truckload of flour just forty-eight hours after the liberation of Florence. The poor were his closest friends; they came first. He never forgets them now. I saw men in rags waiting outside his office; they line his path from his early walk to Mass each morning to his late exit from the City Hall at night. "I hope to enter Paradise with them," La Pira says.

We discussed the new building projects. Hundreds of low-cost dwellings have sprung up throughout the bombed-out districts of Florence. There are clean new hostels for the homeless, new aqueducts, a free milk fund for the school children—"not just for poor children, for *all* children" the mayor explained, "because the poor must never feel singled out!" There were a number of new soup kitchens.

"Is it true," I asked, "that one old bum at the soup kitchen dared you to eat his soup?"

"It is true. I must say it was hard to gulp down the soup, but it showed me what a mess those poor devils were getting. It's better soup now."

"And what about the canaries, *Onorevole?* I've been told that you want every citizen to have a house *and* a canary, and that you plan to have one in each window at the public dormitory."

"Where did you hear that?" he wanted to know. "Yes, strange as it may sound, I believe that the song of a simple sweet little bird like the canary rests the mind and disposes the heart to goodness. Statesmen should have them in their offices, generals in their tents. A lot of trouble would be averted if before taking important decisions they listened for a few moments to these inspiring little birds." I remembered hearing of a hot discussion recently between La Pira and a fellow official who felt that "a house and a job" was slogan enough without adding any feathered complications.

Where does this man get the funds for all of his social improvements? On the matter of expenses, his opponents are bitter. "A Christian leftist," they say, "with a clever sense of double-entry bookkeeping!" For though his trust in Providence is absolute, Providence, they say, can take the garb of any rich landowner or industrialist he happens to meet. Faced with an urgent request from a beggar, La Pira will turn to the rich man—"You, Signor, can surely spare me five thousand lire for the moment, can't you?" The Signor is embarrassed but he generally comes through. "Don't thank me," La Pira will then tell the beggar, "thank God and the Signor."

For city projects which Florence cannot afford and for long-term Government loans far bigger than any granted to other mayors, La Pira goes to Rome. He was a deputy to the Constituent Assembly, was in De Gasperi's first postwar Cabinet, and later served as Undersecretary for Labor to Minister Fanfani. His former colleagues, Luzzati and Dossetti, as well as Fanfani, now Agriculture Minister, help him wholeheartedly. They are all birds of a feather, definitely left-wing too. The flock of them once kept a whole trainload of passengers awake all night singing Gregorian chant on the Rome-Florence express.

BASICALLY, everyone seems to trust La Pira. He never keeps a cent, that is certain. Three young secretaries cash his pay checks as professor. His salary as Mayor is mysteriously untouched. He allows himself enough pocket money for daily hand-outs and to pay his few small bills—he lives on the top floor of a clinic run by a doctor-friend of his, a man whom La Pira helped to bring back to the Church. All the rest of his income goes to charity.

"I think American readers would be amused by your cure for unemployment," I said.

"Oh, we have a great scheme for the jobless," La Pira replied. "We put them all, painters, singers, waiters, carpenters, to planting a lot of nice new trees in

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the city parks and otherwise improving the looks of Florence. They take pride in doing it until they can find a new job. A man who works is happier than one who is idle."

"Seriously, then, you will always stand for total employment?"

"Seriously, then, we must give the people jobs, we must give them hope! I see no point at all in politics unless they benefit the poor!"

I knew that as Labor Undersecretary La Pira had ably arbitrated every sort of labor dispute, but that he had resigned over this very issue of employment. "I favor a policy of full employment," he had stated at the time, "and most party leaders don't." Florence was the testing ground for his conviction on employment. During four and a half years of 'middle-of-the-road' policies, Fabiani, the Communist mayor, had done nothing about joblessness. This little man with the "eyes so hard to refuse," as even Togliatti described him, succeeded in barely over a year.

"How then, in your opinion," I asked him, "can other countries best fight unemployment?"

"We must go back to that first bread, the material and visible bread. For the world to have this bread, I believe that nations in general and the United States in particular must follow a policy of deep economic and financial solidarity. Over the thirsty regions must flow the waters which exceed the richer regions' needs. The first objective of modern world policy must be this material and spiritual elevation of depressed peoples."

"You think then that this pooling is essential?"

"Yes," he said. "Communism will be uprooted only by practicing brotherly love between nations. If you consider how average incomes per capita vary from fifteen hundred dollars in the U. S. to two hundred and fifty in Italy and to less than a hundred in China, you realize how this 'Samaritan' policy must be followed."

"What of the other bread, *Onorevole?"* I asked.

"That other bread I mentioned is spiritual. It is made of art and beauty, of a country's traditional values, but above all of grace and prayer. Therefore nations while in no way hindering their citizens' freedom of choice must gear their policies to favor these values."

"Are you not reminding the governments of the world of this in your second Christian Civilization Convention this year?" I asked. Undoubtedly I had touched a soft spot.

"Thirty-seven delegates from as many countries came last year. Thirteen other countries adhered in principle to our program. Here is my invitation for this year's Convention, written on the Eve of Epiphany."

"Prayer and Poetry are your theme this year, I see."

"Yes, prayer and poetry, the two wings of civilization, to which both East and West have contributed so much. These Florence meetings must help us all to delve more deeply into these values."

The way he brought religion into everything—no wonder, I thought, that his critics jeeringly call him the *sindaco-prete* (the mayor-priest). Only the university professors have seen La Pira's doctorate thesis which began: "In the name of the Most Blessed Trinity." The professors laughed, but the brilliant research work made scholarly history.

The whole of Florence heard him on the eve of elections: "How can you reconcile a system so pointedly materialistic (the Communist) with this luminous transcendental culture, this heavenly architecture?" he asked the crowds. And he had ended his speech by invoking upon the city the intercession of the Blessed Virgin Mary. At this two Communist students had booed; then two Catholic Action boys had rushed up and beat the Communists black and blue. The police had then arrested the Communists as disturbers of the peace. Five minutes later La Pira was at police headquarters. "For Heaven's sake, let them go," he insisted. "These boys meant no harm. They have families!" And the two bewildered students were released. They were for La Pira after that.

I once stood in a crowd watching a twilight procession carrying a copy of the miraculous thirteenth-century Annunciation panel through the streets of Florence. Last in the procession itself was the little mayor in his shabby raincoat. He told the Florentines to treasure not only their city's tradition of beauty and learning but above all its Christian heritage. *"Sia lodato Gesu Cristo"* he said in closing; to my amazement I heard a number of voices in this usually irreverent throng reply, almost despite themselves: *"Sempre sia lodato."*

Critics lampoon and laugh at La Pira's attitude but he stumps them consistently. "We had just proposed a new tax measure," one of the City Councillors told me bitterly. "La Pira listened, then simply replied 'Sorry Gentlemen, *non son queste le vie di Dio* [these are not the ways of God]!' What could any of us say to that?"

As in the matter of funds, La Pira here too has the people's confidence. He lives his religion so intensely that though they laugh at him, they love him. He was seen for days in a pair of friar's sandals after giving his shoes away. Clothes last with the mayor only until he finds someone who needs them more. Three ties, a Christmas present from Premier De Gasperi, stayed with him as many hours.

"Last night I just happened on the story of Gideon," the mayor told me. "What a parallel to our present predicament with the Communists! To defeat the Midianites, the Lord tested Gideon's followers. Only ten thousand were unafraid, out of twenty-two thousand, and only three hundred were finally worthy to fight. We only need a few, but those few will be better than thousands and with them how can we help but win?"

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Catholicism in America

AS CITIZENS, CATHOLICS DO WELL TO REMEMBER THAT "IN POLITICS AS IN SCIENCE THE CHURCH NEED NOT SEEK HER OWN ENDS."

This is the general introductory article to the series "Catholicism in America" which will appear in The Commonweal during the coming months. In the series a number of American Catholic laymen will attempt to make a critical and objective analysis of the character of Catholicism in the United States, with emphasis on specific problems facing Catholics in the context of American culture and civilization. Preceding this, two non-Catholics will state, in general terms, the situation as it appears to them. The first of these articles, "A Protestant Looks at Catholics," by Reinhold Niebuhr, will appear in The Commonweal next week.

THE EDITORS.

WILLIAM P. CLANCY

TO BEGIN a discussion of Catholicism in America with the announced aim of being critical and objective suggests the danger of various misunderstandings. Non-Catholics may see in it an attempt to "Americanize" the Church by watering down its dogmas to make them more palatable to "liberal" tastes. Catholics may fear that the ghosts of Modernism, thoroughly exorcised by Pius X, may loom again in such a topic. It might be well, then, to lessen the danger by indicating at the outset the limits of the discussion. They are implied in a famous observation by Cardinal Gibbons: "The American Church must of its very nature be the same as in Rome or Jerusalem; but in the same manner in which its garb takes on the color of its surroundings, it must also be American."

For a Catholic to discuss "Catholicism in America" is therefore not to discuss Catholicism *as such*. The very nature of the Church, as it understands itself and is understood by its members, makes such a discussion impossible to attempt. The Church, in its dogma and sacraments, essentially transcends both time and place. It knows as little of time and place as it knows of Jew or Gentile, freeman or slave. It knows only Christ and His Revelation—the same yesterday, today, and forever.

But the Church is not only essentially transcendent; it is also, through its members, incarnate in a given time and place. Through its members, it affects a culture and is affected, for better or for worse, by the local conditions and challenges which its members meet. In this sense it assumes that "garb" of which Gibbons spoke, and in this sense we can distinguish "Catholicism" in France, in Ireland, in Italy—and in America. Distinguishing, we can see that differences in attitude and behavior, sometimes minor, sometimes important, exist between the Catholic climate in various times and places. To examine the climate of Catholic opinion and attitudes in American culture, its strength and its weaknesses, is the purpose of this article and of those which will follow it in The Commonweal during the coming months.

Such a discussion does not seem to be a gratuitous undertaking. Recent controversies have made it increasingly necessary. It may be true that it is only the extremists among both Catholics and non-Catholics whose public statements, books and magazines have excited current suspicions, but, extremists aside, there are still real problems to be faced. Many non-Catholics, men of good will, are sincerely disturbed by what they see as a threat to democratic values from a Catholic minority, and many Catholics, also men of good will, are troubled by the threat to spiritual values which the challenge of liberal secularism offers.

To pretend that the fears on either side are completely without foundation in fact, that no ambiguities exist in the present situation, seems to me singularly unreal. And to leave the discussion to Mr. Paul Blanshard on the one side and to his Catholic counterparts on the other seems to me singularly unwise.

THE PROBLEM of Catholicism in America, as seen in its extreme form, might be stated as follows: Catholics see the Church as the only force left strong enough to combat an increasingly arrogant secularist invasion of culture. On every side they see challenged those spiritual values without which civilization becomes mere organized barbarism: in education, in the arts, in entertainment, in politics, in every major sphere of public and private life neo-paganism, frequently masquerading under the name of "liberalism" and "freedom," threatens the foundations of morality, truth, de-

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cency, and public order. To preserve not only the values proper to their own religion but even those basic to the natural law itself, they must oppose the extension of secularism under the name of "democracy."

Many non-Catholics, on the other hand, complain that for all their pious protestations of loyalty to "the American way of life" Catholics in this country constantly exhibit their contempt for ordinary democratic procedures. They say that through their organizations, their political influence, and their pressure groups Catholics everywhere seek to impose their own minority will upon the majority—and that they frequently succeed. Believing that Catholics are authoritarian and anti-liberal by nature, they fear that eventual Catholic dominance in American culture would mark the end of free society as we have known it.

Unfortunately, these conflicting fears even in this extreme form can easily find evidence to support them. By reading various manifestoes of American "liberalism" (some issued from high, ivy-covered places) the Catholic can find strong confirmation of his fears of doctrinaire democracy. And a weekly examination of certain sections of the Catholic press could keep Mr. Blanshard busy and prosperous for many years to come. Let us face it. There is a type of monolithic "democracy" being preached in the United States to which no Catholic could ever subscribe. And some Catholics draw politically and culturally authoritarian implications from their faith which free men necessarily find abhorrent. Interestingly enough, the roots of both these attitudes can be found, I believe, in a common ground. Strikingly dissimilar at first glance, they seem to be, on examination, essentially alike. They are both, in their extreme forms, the fruit of that totalitarian spirit which, hating diversity, demands that all existence be made over to conform to its own vision.

Whether the vision be of time or of eternity seems to be of little matter. The spirit which gives it birth is the same. It is, under various guises, the attempt to overextend one level of reality into the proper domain of another—to subjugate things. As such, it represents a sort of original sin against the hierarchy of creation itself—against things-as-they-are. And it is this, I think, which is the ultimate basis of the Catholicism *vs.* Democracy controversy in America. If we can recognize and dispel this spirit within our own groups we can perhaps begin working together, in a pluralist culture, for those ends which, belonging to the common good, should be the exclusive concern of none.

IN the valuable appendix with which he concluded *True Humanism,* Jacques Maritain discussed three planes on which Christians can act in the world. His discussion of these and the clear distinctions he makes between them seem to me of special value here. It is by ignoring the kind of wisdom Maritain exhibits that extremists, both "liberal" and "Catholic," come to constitute a threat to Church and State. (The whole of Maritain's thought and work is, of course, important to this question of the Christian and modern culture. For the clarity of his vision and the charity of his example not only our own but many future generations must owe him a debt of deep gratitude.)

The three planes of action as Maritain distinguishes them are: first, the spiritual, which is the plane of eternal life and of the Church; second, the temporal, which is the plane of the earthly city and of those activities which are directed to this city's good; and, third, the "mixed," which is the plane on which the spiritual and the temporal join.

On the first plane, the spiritual, Maritain reminds us, our action must be that of Christians *as such,* for this is the plane of the Church, of her dogma and sacraments. Here, therefore, Catholics must act together.

The same may be said for the activity of Catholics on the third, the "mixed" plane, where the spiritual becomes directly involved with the temporal. Here the higher good, the spiritual, must always be the determining object of the Christian's action. In such situations (one thinks of marriage, education, etc.) where a real conflict might occur between the claims of the spiritual and of the temporal goods, the Christian's obligation is obvious.

On the second plane, however, that of the temporal, the city of man, our action cannot be that of Christians *as such* but only that of Christian citizens of the earthly city. For here the determining object of action is not, properly, eternal life but rather the temporal good of the city. And, for that reason, the rule for action here must ordinarily be not unity but diversity.

For Christians to seek a false unity in the order of temporal action would be, as Maritain pointed out, contrary to the very nature of things, a dangerous "political materialization of religious energies." And, although Catholics should take positions on temporal matters "in the light and illumination of their Catholic conscience," it would be intolerable if in so doing they should "claim to speak in the name of Catholicism and implied that all Catholics as such should follow their road."

As Maritain concluded, there is indeed a judgment of Catholicism on political and cultural questions, but "this judgment only bears on certain principles seen from a very lofty angle, on which these questions depend, or on certain spiritual values which they imply." It will not tell the individual Catholic what attitude he should take up on most of the specific temporal questions—political, cultural, educational—with which he will be concerned during his lifetime. There is not, nor can there be, a "Catholic" attitude on these. There is only the attitude of the particular Catholic.

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THE AMERICAN environment is the heir, par excellence, of those dreams of material progress, human perfectibility and an earthly utopia which bemused the genius of Europe during most of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. It is a culture which, perhaps more than any other in history, has sought to canonize the temporal. Having escaped the tragedies which awakened Europe from the Enlightenment's dream, America continues to enjoy that dream. In this sense, the most "progressive" of countries is an anachronism in the modern world.

The major modern spokesmen for a materialistic utopia have been the liberal prophets. Through the Enlightenment's "reason" and its weapon, scientism, they have hoped to make the world over in their own image. Their vision has been that of the earthly paradise, and they have sought to include within that vision the totality of human experience.

It is a vision which religious men continue to find, not only inadequate and naive, but basically terrifying. They are convinced (and modern history fortifies their conviction) that it is a vision which, rejecting absolute morality, must ultimately result in rejecting man himself. They fear that any abandonment of absolute spiritual values for the sake of a material "progress" is more likely to end in Hitler's jungle than in Rousseau's garden.

It has been remarked that the tyranny of a democratic majority is the most terrible of all tyrannies—"The absolute ruler may be a Nero, but he is sometimes Titus or Marcus Aurelius; the people is often Nero, and never Marcus Aurelius"—and this may be true. Yet, even a majority tyranny, if the majority subscribe to some absolute standard of morality, will be somehow limited and humanized. The tyranny of a majority which rejects all absolute morality, however, is a refinement in horror which it has taken the modern world to discover. It is this horror which the democratic absolutists seem to offer in the name of enlightenment, and it is against this threat that religious men react.

The difficulty is that their reaction to the threat and the slogans of doctrinaire secularism sometimes becomes an equally doctrinaire, equally totalitarian, spiritualism. Their challenge to those who distrust the rights of the eternal is to counter-challenge the rights of the temporal. In such a climate, genuine values, both temporal and eternal, are the victims.

I think that the growth of such a climate is the basic problem of "Catholicism in America" today. As the American environment grows increasingly secularized —in education, in literature, in the popular arts and entertainments—Catholics grow more fearful for the survival of spiritual values. And as they do, they attempt to impose a unity and authority on areas of life in which they can make no legitimate spiritual demands. It is a vicious circle. The secularists provide the religious integralists with ammunition to be used against the claims of the temporal, and the integralists, in their turn, give the secularists ammunition for use against the rights of the spiritual. Mr. Blanshard and certain spokesmen for an "integral," "militant" Catholicism really owe each other much.

IT WOULD not seem especially appropriate for a Catholic to advise his non-Catholic fellow citizens on what they should do about the threat he sees from their quarter. For one thing, there is probably little he can do about their problem directly. He can merely point it out and warn against it. His hope will be that they will themselves see that the monolith of democratic absolutism is at least as terrifying a threat to free men as any which may come from Catholics—more terrifying, indeed, because it is more immediate.

But it might be appropriate for a Catholic to recommend to his fellow Catholics meditation on a passage from Lord Acton: "In politics as in science the Church need not seek her own ends. She will obtain them if she encourages the pursuit of the ends of science, which are truth, and of the State, which are liberty." One of the great needs in the American Catholic climate is, I believe, an increased respect for the truth in Acton's observation, which is, ultimately, the truth of Maritain's distinctions on the action proper to Christians on the temporal plane.

For Catholics in America do not lack a zeal for the spiritual. They are orthodox; their churches are full; they seem, on the whole, united and loyal in those things which pertain to eternal life. And on the "mixed" plane of action they seem mature too. Against the threat of secularism they have maintained, sometimes heroically, the sanctity of Christian marriage and the integrity of Christian education. But, on the temporal level, they seem sometimes dangerously unaware. In politics, in literature, in science, and in art, they seem strangely unwilling to render the temporal what is its due, to grant that measure of diversity and freedom which is proper to it.

Absolutisms cannot be transferred from the spiritual to the temporal sphere without doing violence to both spiritual and temporal values. There is a realm of human behavior (that in which most of us operate, practically, all our lives) where an enlightened pragmatism and a respect for tentative judgments are the essential methods of free men. No "Catholic" position is possible here. If Catholics in America can learn a more profound respect for the rights of the temporal, and non-Catholic liberals a more basic reverence for the rights of the spiritual, there need be no further threat to democracy or religion from either side. The obligation involved seems to me to be mutual.

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"LIFE'S" ECONOMICS

Have We Really Got It So Good?

R. W. FAULHABER

LAST January, *Life* published a special issue on the American economy, telling us how big and powerful and sound our economy is. The general conclusion was that despite a few problems we never had it so good, and we can expect the economy to give us more of the same.

Life should have restricted itself to photographic and statistical reporting of the economy's bigness and growth, for no one would doubt its size and spurts of development. But *Life* tries to answer: "What makes the economy tick?" "What have we got here?" and "Where do we go from here?" These are large objectives.

The first problem is that nowhere in this special issue is the question of monopoly dealt with. There is no hint of the increasing concentration of economic power, no clue to the ultimate results of this unchecked trend. As far back as 1935, the dark ages of the American economy, the Bureau of Internal Revenue reported that one-tenth of one per cent of American corporations owned over half of all corporate assets and earned half the income of all corporations. *Life* has reported the big characteristics of the economy, but certainly none is bigger than this and there is no excuse for this omission.

The answer to "What makes our economy tick?", like the answers to the other questions, is not a factual matter but an attempt to create an impression that the economy is sound because the motive or motives behind it are sound. We are told that there is no danger of an economic blow-up, because the economy is based on the most solid part of human nature and principle of classical economics, self-interest. But before reaching this conclusion the possibility that our economy is more a happy accident than anything else, and the role of what has come to be known as the Protestant Ethic, are too lightly dealt with.

That our economy is so big is much more adequately explained by what *Life* briefly alludes to, but does not elaborate on—a "series of happy accidents." The size of our territory, its fertility and resources, the timing of our growth with the Industrial Revolution, the extent of our internal market, an expanding population creating an ever-growing demand and market—all these have stood for some time as the essential ingredients of any explanation.

Nor do we have any solid basis for being satisfied with the economy's present bigness and productivity. With the advantages listed above and many others, possessed by no other nation, one can make out a case that we should be even more productive. To compare the United States with Britain, France, Germany, or Russia is no cause for self-esteem. And if one compares the United States with Canada, which is very close in real production per man-hour worked now, and estimates the future possibilities of that practically unexploited territory, the superiority of the American economy is automatically placed in doubt and we are forced to a more realistic examination of the popular causes of American gianthood.

Life's other suggested reason for our economic supremacy is of peculiar interest, for it lends our system an air of godliness important in a nation where "God" is on the lips of so many. Reference to the Protestant Ethic is no doubt partially valid; the work of Weber, Tawney, Sombart and Troeltsch with a few reservations is generally recognized. But *Life* says the Protestant acting in accordance with his ethic was ". . . testing and proving the axiom that 'God sells all things to industry.' " The inference is clear. Wealth is the evidence of industry; we are then the Almighty's favored people. That is surely a common American assumption. But it is a silly one, in light of common experience, as well as in the more ancient Christian teaching that wealth is a millstone around our necks.

THE OTHER two questions, "What have we got here?" and "Where do we go from here?" are answered respectively by Frederick Lewis Allen and the editors of *Life's* sister-publication, *Fortune*.

Taking the latter first because it is more easily dealt with, the answer is, "We may have a mild recession but there is little chance we will again suffer a 1929-style depression." This seems like a legitimate economic forecast, assuming, however, that a Republican administration will not create a boom psychology leading to a financial bust, that a Republican Congress will act promptly in the event of a recession and apply Keynesian compensating measures, that not every cabinet member believes what is good for General Motors is good for the U. S., that tariffs are not raised, that defense expenditures will not fall below an estimated low of forty billion dollars, and that anti-labor legislation does not cause paralyzing strikes.

But is an attempt to prove the possibility only of a mild recession an answer to the question of the destiny of the economy? The answer should certainly be more than calling the turn of the cycle which implies

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that the United States is concerned only with the possible interruption of the high-level flow of goods, services and jobs.

What will the economic system do about the following problems: Will the concentration of income and assets in a few corporations lead to greater output or the eventual restriction of output? What are the political consequences of this economic phenomenon? Will the introduction of atomic energy to our economy have the social effects of the last industrial revolution? Can the economic system satisfy without continuous political intervention the minimum needs of *all* the people? Will our economy which consumes almost half of the raw materials moving in the channels of world commerce lead us in the direction of imperialism? Will Negroes, migratory workers, share-croppers, etc., be treated in the future as the proletariat of the American economy? How can the economy contribute to the development of the so-called "backward" areas?

These are the kind of questions which should come to mind when it is asked where our economy goes from here. *Life* did not treat them.

THE ANSWER to the question, "What have we got here?" is very reassuring to a people overly fearful of being led down the road to socialism. Now (after the election) we are told that a detour has been taken. This is the case because a "new industrial revolution," dated as far as one can tell from 1940 to 1950, has solved the problems which socialism and Communism were invented to cope with. In short, this has been accomplished by "enlightened" management, tremendous technological progress and welfare state measures. Thus we have "a dynamic new economic system which has safely by-passed socialism"—"capitalism modified by democracy."

Life takes a gentle poke at the socialists, described as holders of an optimistic view of nature. American socialists are in error only on this score, for they are complimented as "strongly anti-Communist," "watchdogs of civil liberties," and as having "strongly attacked the more glaring injustices of capitalism without caring much about theory." But when it comes to incentives they are foggy and advocate things like "mutually helpful group planning in almost any institutional form."

This group planning is being adopted to the American economy, according to *Life,* but "there is no reason to call the result socialism." But why not? If the economy is adopting group planning programs advocated by American socialists, and these same socialists have attacked the "more glaring injustices of capitalism," then the result *is* capitalism modified by socialism, and not the "capitalism modified by democracy" euphemistically preferred by *Life*.

The question of *Life's* logic is not important. But men have been ridiculed, jailed and killed for their espousal of "socialistic" ideas. One can justly feel a cold rage at this deft steal of these men's vision.

Today the "socialistic" solutions, watered down to our mild welfare state, have been largely taken over by the Democrats and accepted by the Republicans. Welfare state measures, abnormal means of suppressing the various endogenous cancers of the economy, are treated primarily as a redistribution of national income which "has provided, for American business, markets of a size undreamed of even in the humming 1920s."

The welfare state and large technological gains are facts, but "enlightened" management hardly falls into that category. The views of management seem to be correctly stated by Mr. Allen, but should not be interpreted as "enlightened." Improved labor relations are largely the result of the realization that it is cheaper to get along with labor than to fight it, and it is doubtful that anything else but the pressure of the unions is responsible for management's new attitudes. Nor is it "enlightened" of management finally to recognize the force of public opinion and the necessity of molding it, an art at which management is becoming more and more adept. One wonders, too, if the startling new products and improved qualities are something for which we must thank an "enlightened" management. Could not these be merely cases such as the "Trade Secrets" house, described in the same issue, where the "know-how" existed years ago, but actual production had to wait until the market was saturated with old products?

But the essential point is that the changes in the economy of today should have been made a century ago. One cannot agree with Mr. Allen that because some of the evils which gave rise to socialism have been wiped out one hundred years after their appearance we "have somehow got going a system which is showing itself to be adapted, not to the past, but to the present and future."

LIFE's view of the economy must not lull us into believing in the dream-world of an economy adapted to the present and future. Economic democracy is not as strong as our political democracy, and if our political proletarians and adolescents are kept in mind, the latter is weak. Neither are present economic conditions definitely stabilized. One is not at all certain that management will remain "enlightened" without a steady, discerning pressure from public opinion and the labor movement. Technology, innovation, will continue only as long as quality and price competition by small business keeps pressure on big business and as long as big business itelf can be kept out of the control of too few. Perhaps in this latter case only big unions

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by sharing in management and consumer representation are capable of dealing with the problem.

The welfare state is full of loopholes through which fall a sizable minority of the people. Besides, welfare state legislation is only a patching up of the economy which in the past and present, despite its ever increasing productivity, does not satisfy the minimum needs of all who work or create a truly human working community. It is not only in countries like Britain, France, Germany, and Sweden that the people have turned to the political for what the economic has not provided, but also in the United States.

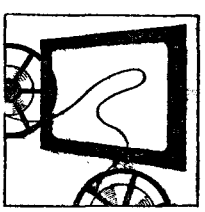
If the economy has not been adapted to the past and is not adapted to the present, how can *Life's* view that it is adapted to the future be accepted—especially when the future places America in the center of the world economy?

The United States faces two problems in the near future. The American economy must provide with certitude for the minimum wants of all who work, and of the disabled, aged, etc., who cannot. This cannot wait on the millenium. Secondly, we must attack the problems of developing other economies so that they too may attain the same goal. The U. S. has the productive capacity to accomplish this now, while others are so far away that the discrepancy, if looked at candidly, is the scandal of the twentieth century.

THE SCREEN

DESIGN FOR CHILLED SPINE

EVEN if it weren't 3-D, "House of Wax" would be the kind of a scary thriller that keeps you on the edge of your chair. Crane Wilbur's script, stemming from an old story by Charles Belden about a mad man (Vincent Price) who runs a wax museum full of realistic exhibits, is packed with gruesome details. For instance, the madman doesn't always use a plaster statue for the base of his figures but occasionally commits murder and then covers his victim's corpse with wax.



All this and third dimension too! Producer Bryan Foy used Natural Vision 3-D (for which you have to wear glasses supplied by the theater manager) and WarnerColor, both of which add to the excitement, and so does WarnerPhonic Sound, which because of the placement of the loud speakers seems to bring the heroine's screams right from the audience. Obviously before you attend "House of Wax" you have to be sure you really want to be part of this show.

Although the wearing of the glasses is a nuisance, 3-D Natural Vision has advanced considerably since "Bwana Devil." However, I still found the stereopticon quality of the picture distracting at times. I got so interested in its realistic effects that I forgot about the picture's plot. Maybe this is as it should be.

FOR those who like their thrills in the science fiction field, there is the documentary-like "The Magnetic Monster." It's all about a group of scientists who finally conquer a radioactive element that doubles its size every eleven hours—and could, unless stopped, take over the whole world.

I got a little lost in all the talk about isotopes, alpha particles and magnetic monsters. But I must say that Curt Siodmak has directed his movie well and has made the cast, headed by Richard Carlson, act as if all this were really happening. At the end when the scientists rush the element to the world's largest deltatron, I was never quite sure what anyone was doing.

IF YOU prefer your thrillers to be more down to earth, "Angel Face," in spite of its title, may fit the bill. Here the big question before the house is whether pretty Jean Simmons is as innocent as she looks or whether she's a hell-cat on wheels. In any case that "on wheels" must be taken very seriously; before the picture ends, you see two blood-curdling automobile wrecks that are by no means just accidents.

Whether or no Jean Simmons is the sweet innocent she seems, Robert Mitchum is very foolish indeed in getting involved with her. Herbert Marshall and Barbara O'Neil, as Jean's father and step-mother, have little choice in their involvements. I think Producer-director Otto Preminger could have improved the suspense in this little mystery by tightening the film. When everything is all finished and explained, you may think it has been too much ado about almost nothing.

IN spite of getting involved in a moral problem which it shakes off too glibly, "Jeopardy" is the kind of suspense picture I find most satisfactory. This completely unpretentious film starts out in a quiet sort of way with a husband, wife and small son (Barry Sullivan, Barbara Stanwyck and Lee Aaker) on a holiday down in Mexico. As they drive southward on Route One in Baja California, the script by Mel Dinelli drops data all the way that will be useful later, so be sure and see this thriller from the beginning. When the family stops at a deserted beach and the father gets his foot caught under the piling of an old pier, the mother goes for help and falls into the clutches of an escaped criminal.

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So you have the doubly tense situation: Barbara trying to outsmart Ralph Meeker, who is using her and her car to get away from the police; Barry trying to get free of the piling before the tide comes in and at the same time trying to prepare his little boy for the worst that may happen.

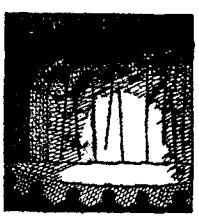
Director John Sturges has succeeded in giving the film a feeling of reality and fright under the bright sun. Meeker's extreme brutality and rippling muscles are exaggerated more than need be; and the deal that Barbara makes with this criminal is of too serious a consequence to be glossed over so lightly; but "Jeopardy" will give you something to think about other than the goose pimples brought on by its suspense.

PHILIP T. HARTUNG.

THE STAGE

ANGELIC DOCTOR

THE SUBJECT of Father Brendan Larnen's play is, of course, St. Thomas Aquinas, from whose history the author has excised a number of *scenes de la vie,* arranging them in the form of an "interpretative biographical drama" rather than a strict biography. I do not imagine any more effective course was open to Father Larnen, but such a method does admittedly deprive "Angelic Doctor" of that dramatic spine which would give it a cohesion and formal distinction it doesn't have.



There are, moreover, special difficulties in a theatrical portrait of the life of sanctity. Its *essential* movement—whatever the profusion of external activity—is all interior and abstract, and experience has shown this, in our time, to be accessible only to the poetic imagination (*vide* Eliot, Henri Gheon). Then too, choice, conflict—the substance of drama—are not really primary considerations in the life of St. Thomas. His passion was rational, and that is a quality not easily conveyed in the theatre. "Angelic Doctor" is at its best in moments of theological disputation, at its weakest in suggesting the labors of the *Summa.*

The Blackfriars production is agreeable, competent and visually impressive. The small stage has not, I think, previously been used to such advantage. But the performances rarely exceed the adequate; indeed, the general level of excellence seems to me a dispiriting one. Every shade and half-tone in Father Larnen's play suffers a pitiless exposure to the most lurid and garish techniques. This strident emphasis is, of course, a fault of inexperience, but that does not alter the damage it does both to "Angelic Doctor" and the sensibilities of the audience. Though their interpretations were not satisfactory, Jerome Richards and Allan Walker nonetheless displayed voices of a striking and sonorous beauty, two of the best which may currently be heard on the stage.

I should add that these reservations constitute a private opinion, and that a large and spirited audience found "Angelic Doctor" much to its taste. A tentative run is scheduled through May 17 (omitting Wednesdays) in the admirable theater on West 57th Street.

RICHARD HAYES.

COMMUNICATIONS

"NEED FOR LIGHT"

St. Paul, Minn.

TO the Editors: As a loyal Protestant reader of your journal ("loyal" to modify both "Protestant" and "reader"), I am naturally concerned about the matter raised in "Need for Light" [March 20, 1953], dealing with the problems which hamper Protestant attempts to understand Roman Catholicism. I would like to comment briefly from a Protestant perspective on some of the points you raise. I rejoice that such an opportunity is offered in a magazine like The Commonweal, for it is only by open conversation that we will come to understand one another. And I am convinced that only if we talk openly together shall we one day be able to say our prayers together.

For one thing, it is important for Catholics to realize that not all Protestants have canonized the writings of Paul Blanshard. Many of us are as disturbed as you are by the presupposition of so much of his writing, namely a militant secularism which would be turned on us just as violently as on you if we were guilty of the "sins" which he labels "sins."

Furthermore, there are numerous Protestants who refuse to take the line of extreme abdication advocated by Protestants and Others United for Separation of Church and State. We feel that to do so would be to sell out our stake in the spiritual welfare of our country, and leave us with nothing to do but tidy our own ecclesiastical backyards. They need tidying, heaven only knows, but there are pressing tasks as well within the body politic to which we must also address ourselves. Our problem is that we have not yet articulated a viable and theologically-oriented approach to this problem. Numerous Protestants are working on this, because they are not satisfied with an approach which seems to suggest that all Protestant policy must be dictated in terms of the fear that someday a parochial school child might get a free lunch bought with Federal funds.

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There are, then, Protestants who are trying to take seriously the notion that Protestantism does not involve simply being "anti-Catholic" but that it must furnish a positive approach to these problems. Such Protestants need help and encouragement from all quarters, including yours.

It must also be said that much of the anti-Catholic animus in ordinary Protestant circles is based on faulty information and an inadequate understanding of Catholic belief. For some of this misunderstanding we are certainly to blame, and for some of it, I think, you must either shoulder the responsibility or decide resolutely to do your part to help set us straight.

For example, many Americans look upon Roman Catholicism simply as a gigantic monolithic structure. There is, I suppose, a sense in which this is true, hierarchically, but there is also, as I am beginning to discover, a sense in which it is profoundly untrue. Most Protestants are inclined to assume that what any Catholic says, particularly if he is a priest, has the blessing and sanction of the whole church. We need to be made to realize that, within limits (which is the hard part for a Protestant to understand), there can be differences of opinion within Catholicism. We have a tendency to equate the most reactionary Spanish bishop's utterance with the voice of the entire Church, and too few of us realize that many of your own number are as upset by the Spanish bishop as we are. Many of my friends assume that because they know of a single parish priest who speaks in favor of Joe McCarthy, McCarthy must have the support of every Catholic from the Pope on down. Fortunately, your own editorials give the lie to that sort of assertion.

We need to be made to see that there are different positions among Catholics, and that not everyone is reduced to a nonentity, simply repeating in parrot fashion what the man above him says. I have been tremendously impressed, for example, by my recent discovery of such creative and exciting activities within Roman Catholicism as the liturgical movement, and the "priest-worker" movement in France. These seem to me to breathe the atmosphere of the Holy Spirit, and I welcome them as expressions of the creativity of God Himself at work in Christendom. But these are not the things most Protestants know about Catholicism. They have usually heard only about the extreme instance where the recalcitrant small-town priest denies the sacraments to a citizen because he voted wrong on the school bond issue. That this sort of thing is very rare I readily concede, and it is the more a tragedy that so many Protestants seize upon such an instance and seek to make it normative.

I mention these matters not in extenuation of our ignorance, but in partial explanation of it. We have an obligation to judge you by your best and not your worst. You have an obligation to acquaint us with your best, and, as far as you are able, to condemn your worst.

Protestants do, however, have a difficult time with certain specific elements in modern Catholicism, and it would be dishonest not to mention some of these. You are undoubtedly wearily familiar with the stock Protestant objections to Catholicism. Let me try to describe a couple of typical Protestant difficulties without resorting to the typical polemics which usually accompany such a discussion.

We gaze (sometimes with envy) at the efficiency with which you can operate, due to your highly organized system of authority in the life of the Church. We sometimes see this invoked with lightning-like speed on legislative issues in a town or state. And many Protestants cannot help wondering why it is not possible, from within this same framework, to bring to an end, for example, the continued destruction and persecution of Protestant missions and missionaries in Latin American countries. I cite this familiar example since it typifies the kind of thing which is thrown at me whenever I try to mitigate some of the anti-Catholic feeling I frequently discover among rabid Protestants. Protestants are, by and large, convinced that priest-incited riots, burning of Protestant churches, and all the rest, could be stopped in a moment if those in authority wished them to be stopped. If we are wrong, we certainly need to be told so.

I must confess that such a situation leaves me disturbed. Is this the sort of thing, I must ask myself, that happens in countries where Roman Catholicism is the heavily dominant faith? I want desperately to answer this question in the negative, but to do so I need more indication than I now see of Roman Catholic desire to answer it in the negative.

This sort of issue *does* make many Protestants worry over the question discussed at the meeting which formed the basis for "Need for Light." What *would* happen if Roman Catholicism became powerful enough to "take over" in America? Would it be like Latin America? Would Protestants be treated as they are there? I know that there is not a simple answer to the question, since I know that there are, on the other side of the ledger, instances on record of Catholic provision for the rights of minorities. Most Protestants do not know this, however. I therefore believe that you have a duty to discuss this sort of thing among yourselves, and, if possible, among us.

The problem is magnified by the fact that there are statements in Catholic writings, all published under the Imprimatur, which scare the living daylights out of Protestants. To cite only one example, there is a statement (which I quote because it is rather famous in Protestant circles) from Ryan and Boland's *Catholic Principles of Politics* which goes like this:

Suppose that the constitutional obstacle to pro-

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scription of non-Catholics has been legitimately removed and they themselves have become numerically insignificant: What then would be the proper course of action for a Catholic State? Apparently, the latter State could logically tolerate only such religious activities as were confined to the members of the dissenting group. It could not permit them to carry on general propaganda nor accord their organization certain privileges that had formerly been extended to all religious corporations, for example, exemption from taxation. While all this is very true in logic and in theory, the event of its practical realization in any State or country is so remote in time and in probability that no practical man will let it disturb his equanimity or affect his attitude toward those who differ from him in religious faith. (p. 320)

Now if that position truly represents the consensus of Roman Catholic opinion in this country, as many Protestants believe it does, you can surely understand that we are worried. It *does* "disturb our equanimity," as, I am sure, it would disturb yours, were the tables reversed. If it does not represent a widely held position, we will be intensely relieved to have other Catholic writers tell us so.

In this area, then, you can do us an immense service, and the cause of Catholic-Protestant relations an immense service, by trying, if possible, to clarify some of these matters for us. I understand, for example, that Father John Courtney Murray has done some very significant interpretation of certain portions of the Syllabus of Errors and encyclicals which have a harsh ring in Protestant ears. This sort of thing must not be buried in theological journals. It must be made available to us, "translated," if need be, into something our laymen can digest, so that we will not see these documents simply, as you say, "in their naked literalness," but "in their historical framework." We need to have as much clarification on matters of this sort as you are willing and able to give us, and we will welcome it warmly.

Your generous concluding statement, "Our own present situation is much too cloudy for others to turn to us seeking light," is only partly true, since there are others who *do* turn to you to seek light on these matters. We are warmed by the statement that you see the need for fresh thought and clarification about these things among yourselves; we are encouraged by the hope that you will seek to give us light on these matters; and we take heart at the thought that we can share these concerns as brothers in Christ.

(*Rev.*) ROBERT MCAFEE BROWN,
Chairman, Department of Religion,
Macalester College.

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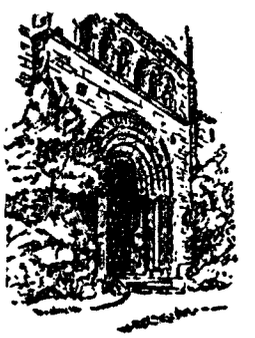

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Seeing the Man Beyond the Legend

FRANCIS THOMPSON AND WILFRED MEYNELL. By Viola Meynell. Dutton. $4.50.

By NEVILLE BRAYBROOKE

JOURNALISM dies hard in the blood and Miss Viola Meynell (who is the third daughter of Wilfrid Meynell) records the story of her father's relationship with Francis Thompson in much the same way as he recorded his meetings and encounters with the poet as a "story." Yet to make such a comment today may sound derogatory —so much has the profession of journalism fallen in public esteem. It is therefore necessary to add that no trace of sensationalism mars Miss Meynell's book, but rather that it stands as a sincere workaday attempt to give the "personal story and characteristics" of two men who "met strangely, lived differently, and were peculiarly and fatefully united." Nor does Miss Meynell invade the province of the critics, preferring instead to let such critical judgments as peep through her "story" appear no more than incidentals—strokes in delineating a character or the gleanings of rummaging through old periodicals. There is this quick, lucky stroke on her father: "A man more of feeling than of intellect, with little literary erudition beyond what might be hastily improvised for the purpose of immediate journalism."

Miss Meynell's story presents Thompson's various volumes of poetry as news and—intentionally or not—the effect of this approach for the modern reader with half a century of poetic experiment behind him is to see Thompson's life and achievement "placed" in a new perspective.

Looking back now at Thompson's life, with all its theatrical turns of fortune, one meets in a piece of such magpie reporting as Miss Meynell's the ideal method for playing down all these elements which with time have come to be regarded as part and parcel of the poets' property shop. The wintry blasted evenings on the embankment and the foggy verminous nights in the dosshouse, the ceaseless craving for laudanum and the sudden chancing upon the whore with a heart of gold—these are incidents which have become poetic clichés; the legend that has obscured the poetry. For it is worth pointing out that whereas in this respect Thompson's life was similar to that of De Quincey's, and later echoed in Léon Bloy's, in each case De Quincey and Bloy have emerged as larger than their legend and hence as real figures (incidentally they are greater writers). With Thompson however the legend has obscured the man and it is to Miss Meynell's credit that in setting Thompson in a full canvas and without passing over the Thames-side scenes of the street-walker episodes, she has been able to reconstruct something of that ghostly figure who would visit Palace Court only to disappear later for months on end. She sees his role in a busy editor's life as one among many, but one which always held a special place in her father's heart. As Miss Meynell, writing of her mother in another context, once exclaimed: "What a transforming thing to my father was his love of Francis Thompson," to imagine him without Thompson's poetry would be to "imagine him a different man."

What matters ultimately about Thompson is his poetry, the intensity of his vision. Because if Thompson was overrated in his lifetime as a poet (as for example by Arnold Bennett), he has now fallen into the trough. Hopkins has superseded him and although there can be no doubt that it was the latter who rejuvenated English poetry, in much the same way that Joyce rejuvenated prose, so it should not be forgotten that Thompson's work states an attitude to life which has not dated, but rather grown with the years in urgency.

When critics carp about his use of polysyllabic Latinisms and Caroline diction it is worth remembering that there are at least a dozen epigraphs which could be taken from *The Hound of Heaven* and applied to Mr. Graham Greene's novels. For the whole modern conception of pursuit, of man being cornered at the last by God, is a constant theme in current fiction, and a theme which always receives great attention in Thompson's work. Indeed though Thompson took meticulous care in his choice of vocabulary, searching out rare texts and digging deep into antiquity, protesting against those who banged "on a strong word like a tin kettle to deafen ye ears of ye groundlings," his efforts were never directed towards coining new phrases or experimenting with fresh stresses. Yet though there was never any conscious efforts at this as there was constantly with Hopkins — "All things counter, original, spare, strange"—there are lines and phrases in Thompson which, momentarily suggesting an equally powerful wielding, are lost in ornate conceits and an excess of proper names. The beginnings of such a language can be glimpsed in this extract, though from such beginnings it would be folly to assume (as Chesterton did) that Thompson stood outside the Victorian era. As Miss Meynell makes clear in her story, and as these stanzas emphasize, if Thompson's poetry was largely made by researching into the accumulated word-hoard of the centuries, then accidentally his vision on occasion was so prophetic that his language became as charged and contemporary as that of Hopkins:

But (when so sad thou canst
not sadder)
Cry;—and upon thy so sore loss
Shall shine the traffic of Jacob's
ladder
Pitched betwixt Heaven and
Charing Cross.
Yea, in the night, my Soul, my
daughter,
Cry,—clinging Heaven by the
hems;
And lo, Christ walking on the
water,
Not of Genesareth, but Thames!

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Sea and Desert

NINE DAYS TO MUKALLA. By Frederic Prokosch. Viking. $3.

By PHILIP J. SCHARPER

DESPITE its rich and varied achievement, the American Novel has never been surfeited with conscious masters of prose style, but among their precious number must certainly be counted Frederic Prokosch. One does not account for the richness of Mr. Prokosch's gift by simply calling him a prose poet; although he has been awarded the Harriet Monroe Prize for poetry, Mr. Prokosch has too much respect for both his poetry and his prose to attempt that easy and unsatisfactory amalgam which has proved a trap too often for the feet of the gifted but unwary. When he writes a novel, his muse becomes a handmaid, not a mistress; his novels depend neither on undisciplined poetry in spate, in the manner of Thomas Wolfe, nor on a carefully wrought style as the projection of the author's carefully wrought personality, in the manner of Truman Capote. Mr. Prokosch is a poetic novelist in the only valid sense of the term,—his prose is vibrant with that reverence for the word, that sensitivity of eye and ear, and that humility before isolated and individual being which are the marks of the serious poet.

In this present work Mr. Prokosch tells the story of four Westerners whose plane crashes on an island near Arabia; to get back to civilization they must cross, symbolically enough, both the sea and the desert. These four—an aging English woman and a young English girl, an American archaeologist and a young American diplomat—enter deeper and deeper into the heart of Arabia as they make their way to Mukalla and the resumption of their respective journeys. And Arabia enters into them as well; each is changed as the world which is Arabia becomes their world, and the ways of the Arabs necessarily their ways during the long, hazardous trek back to the lives they had known before their plane fell from the sky.

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But *Nine Days to Mukalla* is not really their story; it is Arabia's; she is the protagonist, graphically and authoritatively portrayed in terms of her people, her primitive culture, her wild and awesome physical beauty. But above all, it is the soul of Arabia, brooding and inexplicable, which Mr. Prokosch unfolds before the reader as his four Westerners find themselves in a land where their values are valueless and their hopes made pitiable and small; their outer desolation, and their inner isolation, even from each other, strip from them the husks of their "civilized" selves and bare the kernel of true personality within each.

In view of the many merits of this work, it is unfortunate that Mr. Prokosch falters in his depiction of the four Westerners who are central to the novel. While his native characters are brilliantly and memorably portrayed, the major characters seem constantly struggling to emerge from bas-relief. For we never see these characters' thoughts; they never reflect, never probe, never wonder; they simply act. It may be unfair to compare this present work with *Revolt in the Desert* or *Wind, Sand and Stars,* but surely these classics of their kind have become such because we are constantly aware, not merely of bizarre and thrilling adventure, but of its impact on the mind of Lawrence or Saint-Exupery, for whom the outer action was the irritant sand producing the pearl. "The physical drama itself cannot touch us," as Saint Exupery himself remarks, "until someone points out its spiritual sense." Unfortunately, neither author nor characters in *Nine Days to Mukalla* clearly point out the spiritual sense of the gripping physical drama which fills its pages. As a consequence, the four major figures strike the reader as sketches of Western attitudes, rather than portraits of Western people; the full impact of Arabia on their sense and sensibility is thereby softened, and the final significance of the novel blurred.

But if *Nine Days to Mukalla* is only partially successful on this account, it must be noted that it is an honest failure on a high level; as such, it is infinitely more rewarding than most "successful novels" scaled to a minor key. For in encountering Frederic Prokosch, one is happily aware that he is reading the work of an unfortunately rare type—the novelist who seriously regards his medium as a fine art and is not afraid to meet its challenge.

Plea for Bigness

BIG BUSINESS: A New Era. By David E. Lilienthal. Harper. $2.75.

By JAMES O'GARA

IN LIBERAL and New Deal circles, the name of the former chairman of TVA and of the Atomic Energy Commission is one to conjure with. But to many of his admirers, Mr. Lilienthal's present work is likely to seem somewhat shocking. For what Mr. Lilienthal has written is frankly a defense of bigness in business, or, more positively, a plea for more of it.

"My conviction about Big Business, as expressed throughout the book," Mr. Lilienthal writes, "is that it represents a proud and fruitful achievement of the American people as a whole; that in Big Business we have more than an efficient way to produce and distribute basic commodities, and to strengthen the nation's security; we have a social institution that promotes human freedom and individualism."

What Mr. Lilienthal is pleading for is re-examination of the economic scene in view of the changes in American life since 1933, many of them caused by the New Deal itself. His point is that size alone should not lead to condemnation; U. S. strength, he feels, lies in industrial bigness, and he favors more of it. In the course of examining the idea that bigness tends to stifle competition, Mr. Lilienthal has some illuminating things to say about what he calls "the new competition," centering around the part played by new-product research, diversification, competition between various sections of one big company, and the like. But despite all this, Mr. Lilienthal is, I think, a long way from proving his case, or at least facing up to all its implications.

Part of the reason for Mr. Lilienthal's failure flows from the very nature of his book, which fails to do justice to the size of the problem. A portion of this volume originally appeared as a series of articles in a popular magazine; in book form, the over-all impression is one of slightness and of failure to plumb any idea very deeply, despite the importance of Mr. Lilienthal's subject and his unquestioned ability.

Because the book is a defense of bigness in business, Lilienthal may be accused of betraying the New Deal. Actually, it seems to me that a major flaw in his thesis stems from the fact that he is too good a New Dealer. He would not deny the bad old days in American economic history. But he thinks that New Deal reforms changed the whole picture, to the extent that the danger of abuses by Big Business has been reduced to what he calls "quite manageable proportions."

To this outsider, at least, the reforms of the New Deal do not seem quite as potent or as fundamental as they do to Mr. Lilienthal. We are all going to be surprised, I think, at how much of what we call the New Deal depended upon day-to-day administration rather than upon legislation. The New Deal is not likely to be dismantled wholesale. But a low-cost housing project or a public-works program administered, say, by Harry Hopkins, is likely to be quite a different cup of tea from that carried out by a man frankly opposed to the whole idea.

Mr. Lilienthal may be right in feeling that the new sense of social obligation developed by the leaders of Big Business since 1929 will make all the difference. But in such matters it seems to me at once unrealistic and unfair to rely so heavily on good intentions, no matter how real. Without further legislation and more careful planning than we now have or even appear to be aiming at, I would hate to see this new sense of social responsibility put to the test of a serious depression.

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The Humanistic Vocation of Literature

THE DISINHERITED MIND: Essays in Modern German Literature and Thought. By Erich Heller. Dufour Editions. $4.

By JOHN W. SIMONS

IT is good to have an American edition of Professor Heller's essays on modern German literature and thought. Last year, when it was published in England, *The Disinherited Mind* stirred even phlegmatic reviewers to an unwonted enthusiasm. It is easy to see why. The author is thoroughly conversant with modern German writing, with contemporary thought, and with the plight of European civilization. He is likewise fully committed to the belief that ideas have consequences, and he resents what he considers the false dichotomy which has been set up between art and belief. He insists on the humanistic vocation of the professor of literature, and he refuses to exempt that vocation from the task of the criticism of *all* the values which manifest themselves in literary works.

Admittedly, the writers he discusses with most effectiveness are precisely those most calculated to enhance the prestige of his own thesis. It is the ideological element which predominates in Burckhardt, Nietzsche and Spengler. It does not predominate, though it is potent, in Goethe and Kraus. It is least apparent in Kafka and Rilke, and Professor Heller's examination of these "pure" writers leaves a number of questions unanswered. Even here, however, the author can be provocative and embarrassing. It will not be easy for future critics to present Kafka as either a Kierkegaardian or a Catholic *manqué*. And it will not be easy to disparage the profound affinity which the author sees between the art of Rilke and the thought of Nietzsche.

Professor Heller thinks that the most obvious feature of modern poetry and thought is its "consciousness of life's increasing depreciation." He is concerned with the way his authors have confronted or circumvented this fact, and he assesses their relative failure and success. It is in the study of the varying conceptions of history as he finds them in Burckhardt, Nietzsche, and Spengler that the author finds, on the one hand, his theme of life's depreciation and, on the other, the unique sensibilities of the historians themselves.

Professor Heller is a strong advocate of the intuitionist approach to life and learning. He is at the same time a very severe critic of the scientific method. In this he is in agreement with the very writers he discusses; yet, as he himself is forced to admit, somewhere along the line their intuitions went awry. Burckhardt, for example, was influenced by the German Higher Criticism of the Bible, and he came to regard even the birth of Christ as a myth. But though he lost his faith, his sense of Original Sin (in its extreme Protestant sense) survived in a kind of secularized metamorphosis in his concept of history. History, he claims, has as its focal point the study of man. It is therefore a study which is "in a sense *pathological* in kind."

Nietzsche was not, of course, a professional historian. It is of the stuff of history, just the same, that he fabricates his annihilating and nihilist criticism of life. Once again it is a criticism and a solution compounded of observation and intuition—the Satanic counterpart of St. Augustine's City of God. With Spengler we have an easier and more superficial problem. The Hegelian triad is adapted to an evolutionary concept of a rather primitive type, and the facts of history are made to pirouette to his preconceived harmonies.

Goethe's interest in science is taken very seriously by Professor Heller, but once again it is Goethe's intuitional approach which receives his encomia. Thomas Mann speaks of Goethe as a "pan-amateur" in matters scientific, and a recent writer traces all of Goethe's scientific interests to his superstitious regard for alchemical wizardy. But other scientists, from von Humboldt on, have shown respect for the treatises on the *Urpflanze* and on colors, just as some have shown a respect for Poe's intuitional relativism as expressed in *Eureka*.

The central essay of Professor Heller's works is the least satisfactory. It attempts to do two things which were better done separately; for, in order to buttress his thesis of the interrelationship between the poetry of Rilke and the thought of Goethe, he launches into a discourse on the relationship between poetry and belief. He attempts to discredit Eliot's observations on the distinction between the two, but his attempt is vitiated by a poor understanding of Eliot's position. Eliot has never underestimated, as this critic seems to think, the pressure of a poet's beliefs upon his art.

The primary value of these essays lies in their cautious and convincing analysis of the loss of the sense of values and the heroic attempt of certain German writers to compensate for that loss. Though it seems clear that Professor Heller has intimations of absolute values—

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intimations which permit him to put a sure finger on the failures of his authors—he nevertheless manifests a disappointing reticence as to what he himself believes. To equate rational knowledge with scientific positivism is to depreciate reason unduly; while to make claims for intuition in the face of such calamitous results as are presented here is surely a perverse optimism.

The author's concern with history is significant, for it reveals a major neurosis of our time. History is essentially a flux. We can never fully comprehend it unless we get outside it, and we can never get outside it unless we believe that there is One Who is outside it Who governs it. The choice is not between immanence and transcendence, for immanence can only safely be recognized through transcendence. The search for the meaning of history has brought forth an elite of titans—men who manipulate vast ground swells of culture as if they were gods.

SAINTS WESTWARD. By Donald Attwater. Kenedy. $2.50.

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REVIEWERS

Neville Braybrooke is an English critic and editor who contributes literary articles to Catholic reviews on both sides of the Atlantic.

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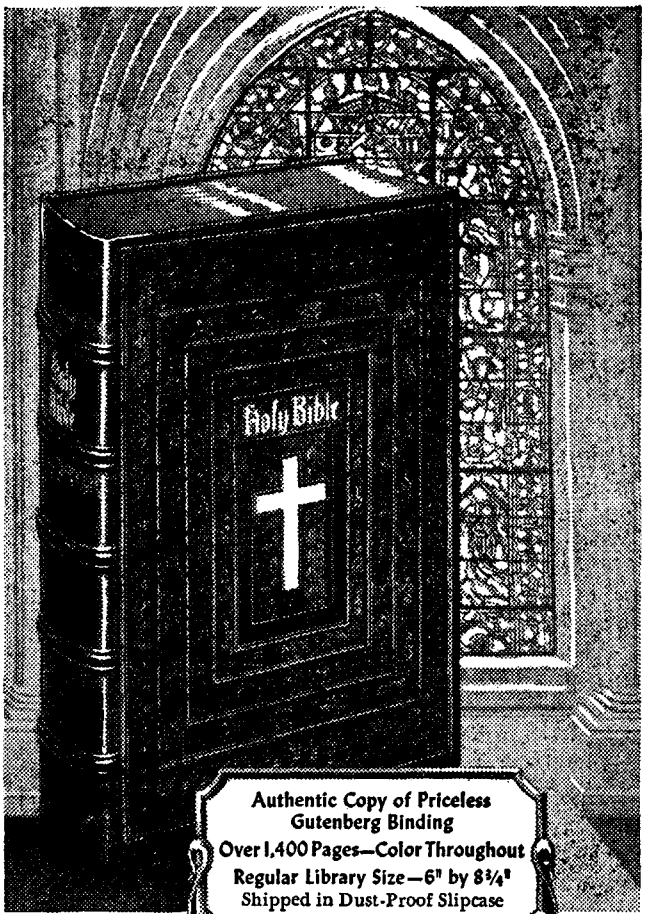

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